

IN THE CLAIMS:

Claim 1 (previously presented) An aqueous ink composition containing a coloring agent, a dispersing resin containing a first repeating unit structure having an unneutralized group and a second repeating unit structure having a neutralized group and capable of being hydrated and/or dissolved in water, a water-soluble organic solvent capable of swelling and/or dissolving the first repeating unit structure, and water, wherein the first repeating unit structure has a molar ratio in the range of from 1% to 67% based on the sum of the first repeating unit structure and the second repeating unit structure.

Claim 2 (original) The aqueous ink composition according to claim 1, wherein the water-soluble organic solvent is a cyclic amide compound and/or a cyclic urea compound.

Claim 3 (original) The aqueous ink composition according to claim 1, wherein the water-soluble organic solvent is a glycol monoether derivative of a polyhydric alcohol.

Claim 4 (currently amended) The aqueous ink composition according to claim 1, wherein the water-soluble organic solvent is a monohydric alcohol having from 1 to 5 carbon atoms and a solubility in water at 20°C of at least 0.5 wt%.

Claim 5 (previously presented) The aqueous ink composition according to claim 1, wherein the weight of the first repeating unit structure is in the range of from 0.05 %

by weight to 10 % by weight based on the weight of the water-soluble organic solvent.

Claim 6 (previously presented) The aqueous ink composition according to claim 1, wherein the weight of the first repeating unit structure is in the range of from 0.15 % by weight to 5 % by weight based on the weight of the water-soluble organic solvent.

Claim 7 (previously presented) The aqueous ink composition according to claim 1, wherein the coloring agent is carbon black.

Claim 8 (previously presented) The aqueous ink composition according to claim 1, wherein the coloring agent is an organic pigment.

Claim 9 (previously presented) The aqueous ink composition according to claim 1, wherein the coloring agent is selected from the group consisting of oil-soluble dyes and disperse dyes.

Claim 10 (previously presented) The aqueous ink composition according to claim 1, wherein the unneutralized group of the first repeating unit structure is a carboxylic acid group and ~~that~~ the neutralized group of the second repeating unit structure is a carboxylic acid anion group.

Claim 11 (cancelled)

Claim 12 (previously presented) The aqueous ink composition according to claim 1,

wherein the first repeating unit structure has a molar ratio in the range of from 1 % to 30 % based on the sum of the first repeating unit structure and the second repeating unit structure.

Claim 13 (previously presented) The aqueous ink composition according to claim 1, further containing a weakly alkaline agent, wherein the composition is alkaline.

Claim 14 (original) The aqueous ink composition according to claim 13, wherein the weakly alkaline agent is selected from organic acid salts and organic buffering agents.

Claim 15 (previously presented) The aqueous ink composition according to claim 1, further containing a water-soluble and/or water-dispersible addition resin.

Claim 16 (previously presented) The aqueous ink composition according to claim 15, wherein the water-soluble and/or water-dispersible addition resin has a first repeating unit structure having an unneutralized group and a second repeating unit structure having a neutralized group and capable of being hydrated and/or dissolved in water.

Claim 17 (previously presented) An inkjet recording method comprising ejecting a droplet of the aqueous ink composition according to claim 1 so as to make the droplet adhere to a recording medium, thereby carrying out recording.

Claim 18 (previously presented) Recorded matter printed with the aqueous ink composition according to claim 1 by an inkjet recording method.

Claim 19 (previously presented). An aqueous ink composition comprising (a) a coloring agent, (b) a water soluble organic solvent, (c) water and (d) a dispersing resin prepared by (i) providing a resin comprising carboxylic acid groups and (ii) neutralizing a portion of the carboxylic acid groups to form carboxylic acid anion groups therefrom, wherein a molar ratio of carboxylic acid groups to carboxylic acid anion acid and carboxylate groups in the dispersing resin after the neutralizing is such that a fluctuation between a first viscosity difference of the aqueous ink composition immediately after preparation and after it stands at 60°C for 2 weeks and then stands frozen for 1 week and a second viscosity difference of the aqueous ink composition immediately after preparation and after it stands at 60°C for one month and then stands frozen for 1 week is less than +/- 3%, said molar ratio being in the range of 1 to 67%.